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EDC 423

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Text-Based Discussion Plan

**Part 1: Text Analysis**

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| Resources | Challenges |
| P.10: Reading Strategy on title page: Asking students to make text to text connections. Helpful for comparing & contrasting. | P.12: Structure is somewhat jumpy:   * Story (One specific cheetah in 1st paragraph) → Informative (All cheetahs in 2nd paragraph) |
| P.10-11: Title: Explicit and prepares students for what they will be reading and learning about. | P.14: Vocabulary and Anatomy Descriptions can be complex for grade level. “It’s like a boat’s rudder”. On P. 17, “traction” and “fatigue”. |
| Throughout Text & P.17: Bolded Words & Wordwise: Draw attention and help to expand vocab. | P.12, 4th para: Author introduces cheetah by its faults, then claims that it is “built to hunt”, “successful predator”. Students must make inference that characteristics discussed on first page are not related to a cheetah’s success as a hunter. |
| Throughout Text: Photographs: Provide visual aid for students. | Throughout Text: Certain sections are very long and overly detailed, which can lose a student’s attention or confuse. |
| Throughout Text: Story-like structure and section headings provide good transitions from one idea to next and keeps attention. For example, “On the Lookout” section was focused on cheetah’s eyes, but also conveyed the first step of hunting prey. | P. 13, 1st para: “They [black marks under eyes] help cut down glare from the bright sun”. This is a somewhat complex/technical idea that isn’t explained further and students might not understand. |
| Throughout Text: Sentences are mostly short, and straightforward. | P.13, 2nd para: “sharp eyes”: Must have background knowledge and infer that here, the word “sharp” indicates clarity, not pointiness. |
| P.14, 4th para: “This cat looks like it’s flying!”: Provides a helpful mental image of how a cheetah’s body looks when it’s running. |  |
| Throughout Text: Repetitive use of the word “adaption” which is a key term to understanding the text. |  |
| P.14, 2nd column, last section.: Other big cats have round fluffy tails. Not the cheetah.” Comparing and contrasting occurring which helps students to distinguish the cheetah amongst other animals or cats. |  |

**Part 2: Learning Goals**

1. **Main Ideas:**
   1. The cheetah’s anatomical adaptations such as black markings under eyes, flexible spine, claws that only semi-retract, flat tails, allow it to effectively hunt prey and survive in the wild.
   2. Despite its physiological flaws, a cheetah is still able to function and be a successful hunter in the wild.
   3. In comparison to other animals in the cat family, the cheetah has distinct characteristics that make it unique and successful in the wild.
2. **“Big” Ideas:**
   1. The physical features of the natural world, including animals, humans, even plants, etc. have specific characteristics or can evolve and adapt to be able to survive in their environment.
   2. Beings are made up of strengths and weaknesses; there is always room for potential and success with dedication and hard work.
   3. A single text can both tell a story and give us information at the same time; Comparing and contrasting is a useful tool in promoting reader comprehension.
3. **Learning Goals:**
   1. Howare cheetahs and other animals able to survive in their environment?
      1. Studentsneed to know about adaptations, and that they have a specific function that will help the animal to survive.
         1. Black markings under eyes to prevent sun glare.
         2. Flexible spines to move in different directions quickly.
         3. Claws that semi-retract to give cheetah more traction.
         4. Flat tails to maintain balance.
      2. Students need to know that there is a balance between the innate strengths and weaknesses of all living creatures.
         1. Cheetahs have flaws such as a quiet roar, cannot run for a long period of time, cannot see well in the dark
         2. Also have important strengths (listed above) to balance out weaknesses and allow for survival.
      3. Students need to understand the correlation between a specific characteristic and how the animal can benefit from it.
         1. Black markings under eyes absorb light and prevent glare.
         2. Flexible bones allow cheetah to twist and turn quickly without breaking a bone.
         3. Claws stay halfway outside of paw at all times to help it run with more stability, and catch prey.
         4. Flat tail helps cheetah maintain balance while in pursuit of prey so that it doesn’t fall or lose control of its body.
   2. Howdo we compareand contrast?
      1. Students need toknow how to identifyand understand differences and similarities of two things.
         1. Know we are comparing and contrasting when another animal is brought up.
         2. Key phrases : different from, unlike the, similar to the.. etc.

**Part 3: Planning the Launch**

**Teacher:** So, boys and girls… We’re going to try an activity together. Tuck your thumb into the palm of your hand, like this. [Show picture].



Now, try to write your name with a pen or pencil without using your thumb. Try tying your shoelace, zippering a zipper, or buttoning a button without using your thumb.

**Students:** [Should show some difficulty in accomplishing tasks].

**Teacher:** It’s pretty difficult to do things without using your thumb, isn’t it? Most animals like cats, dogs, horses don’t have thumbs that work like ours do. So why do we have thumbs?

**Students: [**They help us to do everyday things.]

**Teacher:** Yeah, they’re very helpful for humans. This is a physical trait that we have to make our lives easier. So what about other animals? Let’s find out what characteristics another animal has that helps it to survive in this article about cheetahs.

**Part 4: Planning the Exit**

To assess students, I would probably give out a worksheet that pictured different body parts on a cheetah, and have them explain by writing how each part helps the cheetah survive in the wild. I would then push the assessment a step further providing pictures of other animals on the worksheet and asking students to identify a physical feature and give a reason as to why they think that particular animal has that quality. I attached a hypothetical worksheet to this assignment.

Doing this would assess the students’ knowledge of the main idea of the text; how cheetahs are able to survive in the wild, it would assess a big idea; all living creatures and nature are able to adapt or respond to the environment that they live in, and it was also promote the act of comparing and contrasting information. Looking at different animals and identifying what makes them unique and why is a form of comparing and contrasting that younger children would be able to understand.

**Part 5: Planning Ways to Support Student Interactions with Text Ideas**

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| **Page/Ending Phrase** | **Question** |
| **P.12, 4th para: “Yet the cheetah is one of the world’s most successful predators”.** | **Q: So, in what ways do we think a cheetah might be a strong hunter?**  **A: Muscles, claws, roar.**  **Q: Right, what is the author telling us in that very first section, though?**  **A: Cheetahs are not strong in ways we think.**  **Q: So, does that mean that cheetahs are weak?**  **A: No, just strong in different ways.**  **Q: How do we know that?**  **A: Author says cheetahs are one of the world’s most successful predators.** |
| **P.12, 6th para: “A characteristic is a trait that makes something different from others”.** | **Q: What did we just learn in that paragraph?**  **A: We learned that cheetahs have traits that help them survive and be good hunters.**  **Q: What are those traits called?**  **A: Characteristics [or] Adaptations**  **Q: Is there a difference between characteristics and adaptations?**  **A: Yes, adaptations help an animal survive and a characteristic is a trait that makes something different.** |
| **P.14, 6th para: “If it doesn’t it must find other prey or go hungry”.** | **Q: What are some things that we have learned about cheetahs so far?**  **A: Run fast for short time, Black markings under eyes to help see, flexible bones, spine.**  **Q: Great, and what are these traits called, characteristics or adaptations or both?**  **A: Adaptations**  **Q: How do you know?**  **A: A characteristic means different from others and we don’t know if these traits are different from others.** |
| **P. 14, 13th para: “A cheetah’s tail and feet help the cat change direction with ease”.** | **Q: What new things have we learned about cheetahs?**  **A: Claws don’t retract, tails are flat and help keep balance.**  **Q: Great, are these traits characteristics, adaptations, or both?**  **A: Both**  **Q: How do you know?**  **A: The author told us that other cats do not have these traits, making them an adaptation and a unique characteristics to cheetahs.** |
| **P.16, 5th para: “Stronger animals like these will try to steal this meal from cheetah”.** | **Q: Do we think that this is a real story, that the author saw this happening and wrote about it?**  **A: No**  **Q: How do you know that?**  **A: It is a made up story that gives us facts.** |
| **P.16, 8th para: “All these adaptations make the cheetah an awesome predator”.** | **Q: So what did we think about the cheetah before we started reading that is different from what we know about the cheetah now?**  **A: We thought the roar, muscles, and claws were important, but now we know that other things like black fur, flexible spine, tail, and blunt claws are important too.**  **Q: So is the cheetah weak because it can’t roar loud and doesn’t have sharp claws?**  **A: No, the other adaptations balance it out.** |
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